



Labor and Workforce Development

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BOSTON, MA – The state's total unemployment rate dropped to 4.2 percent in August, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development announced Thursday.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' preliminary job estimates indicate Massachusetts added 10,800 jobs in August. Over the month, the private sector added 9,900 jobs as gains occurred in Professional, Scientific, and Business Services; Other Services; Information; Construction; and Manufacturing. The July estimate was revised to a gain of 2,500 jobs.

From August 2016 to August 2017, BLS estimates Massachusetts has added 57,400 jobs.

The August unemployment rate was two-tenths of a percentage point lower than the national rate of 4.4 percent reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"Massachusetts has gained 57,400 jobs in the last year, with much of that growth concentrated in key economic sectors like Health, Education, Professional, Business, and Scientific services. While these job gains, alongside a low unemployment rate, are signs of a strong economy in the Commonwealth, skills gaps and labor market pressures persist. That is why our workforce development agencies and partners continue to focus on matching available workers with the training and resources they need to connect to high demand jobs," Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Rosalin Acosta said.

The labor force decreased by 17,200 from 3,697,700 in July, as 10,700 fewer residents were employed and 6,500 fewer residents were unemployed over the month.

Over the year, the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased eight-tenths of a percentage point from 3.4 percent in August 2016. There were 31,300 more unemployed residents over the year compared to August 2016.

The state's labor force participation rate – the total number of residents 16 or older who worked or were unemployed and actively sought work in the last four weeks – decreased three-tenths of a percentage point to 66.1 percent over the month. The labor force participation rate over the year has increased 1.3 percent compared to August 2016.

The largest private sector percentage job gains over the year were in Other Services; Professional, Scientific and Business Services; Education and Health Services; and Financial Activities.

August 2017 Employment Overview

Professional, Scientific and Business Services added 7,100 (+1.3%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Professional, Scientific and Business Services added 16,800 (+3.0%) jobs.

Other Services gained 4,600 (+3.3%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Other Services are up 7,600 (+5.6%) jobs.

Information added 1,300 (+1.5%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Information gained 400 (+0.4%) jobs.

Construction gained 400 (+0.3%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Construction has added 3,400 (+2.3%) jobs.

Manufacturing added 200 (+0.1%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Manufacturing lost 900 (-0.4%) jobs.

Financial Activities lost 300 (-0.1%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Financial Activities gained 5,500 (+2.5%) jobs.

Education and Health Services lost 300 (0.0%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Education and Health Services gained 22,600 (+2.9%) jobs.

Trade, Transportation and Utilities lost 700 (-0.1%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Trade, Transportation and Utilities gained 1,000 (+0.2%) jobs.

Leisure and Hospitality lost 2,400 jobs (-0.7%) over the month. Over the year, Leisure and Hospitality lost 1,300 (-0.4%) jobs.

Government added 900 (+0.2%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Government gained 2,200 (+0.5%) jobs.


Labor Force Overview

The August estimates show 3,526,200 Massachusetts residents were employed and 154,200 were unemployed, for a total labor force of 3,680,400. The unemployment rate dropped one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.2 percent over the month. The August labor force decreased by 17,200 from 3,697,700 in July, as 10,700 fewer residents were employed and 6,500 fewer residents were unemployed over the month. The labor force participation rate, the share of working age population employed and unemployed, was 66.1 percent. The labor force was up 93,900 from the 3,586,600 August 2016 estimate, with 62,600 more residents employed and 31,300 more residents unemployed.

The unemployment rate is based on a monthly sample of households. The job estimates are derived from a monthly sample survey of employers. As a result, the two statistics may exhibit different monthly trends.

NOTES:

The labor force is the sum of the numbers of employed residents and those unemployed, that is residents not working but actively seeking work in the last four weeks. Estimates may not add up to the total labor force due to rounding.

Local area unemployment statistics for August 2017 will be released on Tuesday, September 19, 2017. The preliminary September 2017 and revised August 2017 unemployment rate, labor force and job estimates for Massachusetts will be released on Thursday, October 19, 2017. See the [2017 Revised Media Advisory annual schedule](#)  for a complete list of release dates.

Detailed labor market information is available at www.mass.gov/lmi.

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